

# PLAN MONITORING

To be successful, comprehensive planning must be an ongoing activity. Plan monitoring involves establishing accountability tools for tracking progress over time. The progress matrix (Table 5) is a basic plan monitoring tool that identifies timeframes for the accomplishment of catalyst actions: short-term (one to three years), midterm (three to five years), and long-term (five years and beyond).

Plan monitoring is a dynamic process. Key strategies, catalyst actions, and policy directives should be reviewed on an annual basis and refined with changing circumstances. As data become available, indicators or other specific measures that monitor the accomplishment of achievable goals should be established for each plan theme.

Finally, the entire plan document should be considered for public review and update five years from its adoption.

Table 5: Progress Matrix

Catalyst Action	Completion Timeframe	% Complete
Update the Bennett Land Use Code and its associated design standards to offer a range of available, affordable and diverse housing options.	Mid-term	___%
Prepare a Target Industry Market Study to determine advantages and priorities for attracting a variety of new commercial and industrial development into identified employment center locations that will also meet the daily needs of area workers.	Mid-term	___%
Revise local land use regulations to include provisions for conservation subdivisions.	Short-term	___%
Pursue the introduction of express bus service to the Denver metro area.	Long-term	___%
Evaluate options, select the preferred mechanism, draft a service plan, and establish a financing district that generally covers the planning area.	Mid-term	___%
Conduct a sidewalk survey within the current incorporated Town boundaries and prepare recommendations for the construction and maintenance of new and existing sidewalks.	Short-term	___%
Adopt an Annexation Strategic Plan that serves to support Colorado statutory provision C.R.S 31-12-105, which requires that a municipality have a plan in place prior to the annexation of any land.	Short-term	___%
Negotiate intergovernmental agreements for coordinated planning and service provision with the City of Aurora, Adams County and Arapahoe County.	Midterm	___%

## Acknowledgements

### Bennett Board of Trustees

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# 2012 TOWN OF BENNETT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Bennett, Colorado is uniquely positioned to capture the next wave of growth within the Denver metropolitan area. Bennett's close proximity to Denver International Airport, the Front Range Airport, I-70, E-470, and the Union Pacific Railroad are all factors which will have a direct impact on the future growth of the Town, an incorporated area that currently totals 5.4 square miles.

Bennett's community leaders are visionary and willing to take bold steps to secure the Town's future. As a first step in implementing recommendations from a study recently completed for the I-70 Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (REAP), the Town has identified a 91.4 square mile "Area of Planning Interest". Bennett's growth intentions are reflected by its objective to introduce a renewable water supply into its Area of Planning Interest. The prospect for growth associated with a renewable water supply is a fundamental tenet of this comprehensive plan.

Bennett is committed to responsible planned development; economic vitality; a program for public improvements; and improving the quality of life for its residents. The purpose of the 2012 Town of Bennett Comprehensive Plan is to update the Town's 1999 Comprehensive Plan and address the potential for development within Bennett's Area of Planning Interest. The assumptions derived from the 1999 Comprehensive Plan that remain relevant and shape the preparation of the 2012 Comprehensive Plan are:

- **Residential and commercial development is inevitable due to regional growth pressures, proximity to transportation infrastructure, and availability of services;**
- **Adams County and Arapahoe County recognize Bennett's interest in development issues; and**
- **Distinction can be made between varying levels of development within Bennett's geographic area of interest.**

## USE OF THE PLAN

The 2012 Town of Bennett Comprehensive Plan is structured around a Preferred Scenario (pages 8-9) that serves as the heart of the plan, and eight plan themes: Neighborhoods, Employment, Open Lands, Transportation, Services and Infrastructure, Community Health, Annexation, and Intergovernmental Relations. Each plan theme contains an achievable goal, key strategy, catalyst action, and one or more policy directives:

- **An achievable goal is a statement of an ideal condition that can accomplish objectives specific to a plan theme. An achievable goal is supported by one or more key strategies, catalyst actions, and/or policy directives.**
- **A key strategy is a statement of a specific approach directed toward the achievement of a goal.**
- **A catalyst action is a statement of an initiative that will dictate the success of reaching an achievable goal more than any other program or activity. The Plan Monitoring section (page 16) identifies the short-term, mid-term, and long term time frames established for implementation of catalyst actions.**
- **A policy directive is a statement consistent with a strategy to prescribe, restrict or otherwise guide or direct an action.**

This plan is intended to provide appointed and elected officials, land owners, project applicants and other stakeholders with a broad policy tool for guiding decisions concerning future growth and land use. As the Area of Planning Interest is regional in scale, plan implementation will require intergovernmental coordination and an additional level of public policy guidance and in depth study. The achievable goals, key strategies, catalyst actions, and policy directives detailed within this document serve as the first generation of what is anticipated to be an ongoing, dynamic

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A guiding principle is a core value or standard that provides direction for creating the plan. The following are a set of guiding principles, refined after feedback received from the public workshop conducted May 12th, 2011.

**1. Develop town and neighborhood centers with mixed land use and greater land density to shorten distances between homes, workplaces, schools, shopping, places of worship, cultural facilities, and recreation and social activities**

**2. Design new developments in a manner to blend with the rural setting and preserve natural features and areas designated for agricultural production**

**3. Ensure that affordable housing and access to healthy living is available for people of all ages and income levels**

**4. Offer access to open space, trails and parks to provide more opportunities for walking, biking, recreation, and contact with nature**

**5. Foster a distinctive, attractive community that retains our young people to support future community governance**

**6. Preserve open space, farmland, and areas that have environmental significance to the region, particularly that are susceptible to flood hazard; are identified aquifer recharge areas; have natural mineral wealth; or are prime agricultural land**

**7. New development should be contiguous, or nearly so, to existing infrastructure and services**

**8. Provide a variety of transportation choices including bicycle trails; sidewalks; and mass transit to reduce the dependence upon automobiles; and create streets that are safe for use by automobiles, pedestrians, and bicyclists**

**9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective, with the responsibility of designing and constructing the infrastructure required for new development shared by all parties receiving benefit**

**10. Remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth**

## VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement expresses the overall image of what a community wants to become in the future. The following vision statement has been adopted by the Bennett Town Board:

***The Town Board of Trustees will proactively manage community needs to develop the Town of Bennett into one of the premier “rural town centers” of Colorado, providing optimum levels of service to our citizens.***



## SUMMARY OF PROJECTED GROWTH

The projections for the Area of Planning Interest show significant growth between 2010 and 2035. These projections were completed in 2005 by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), prior to the recent recession, and have been modified by EPS to account for regional employment contraction. Notwithstanding this contraction, the future growth of the Bennett planning area remains strong.

As shown in Table 4, the planning area is estimated to grow by 6,454 housing units and 2,568 new jobs. This projected growth in housing units and employment creates the demand for 1,382 acres. 1,149 acres of land are needed to allow for the projected growth in housing. There is a projected demand for 43 acres of office, 71 acres of retail and 118 acres of industrial land.

These base numbers were forecasted using DRCOG growth rates, with modifications by EPS to reflect more current projections made by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the Center for Business and Economic Forecasts (CBEF).

The revised employment projections align job and housing expansion to reflect balanced growth in Bennett’s future. This reinforces one of the core concepts of the plan, which calls for neighborhood and employment centers with ample opportunities to live, work, and play locally.

The land area needed to fulfill market demands is much smaller than the collective Tier 2 Developing Urban locations within the Area of Planning Interest. The difference can be attributed to three factors:

- **Growth will continue to occur beyond the 2035 forecast horizon.**
- **The plan’s nodal concept limits development intensity to areas within identified employment and neighborhood centers.**
- **DRCOG’s forecast may not accurately reflect market pressures on the periphery of the Denver metropolitan area. Thus, market demand may exceed these figures.**

**Table 4:  
Town of Bennett Growth Forecast, 2010-2035**

Land Use	Factor	Change 2010 - 2035	
		Number of Units/Sq. Ft.	Acres Required
Additional Housing Units		6,454	
Avg. Household Size	2.65		
Additional Jobs		2,568	
Jobs to Housing Ratio	0.42		
<b>Residential</b>			
Low Density Single Family	3.5 DU/Acre	968	346
Medium Density Single Family	7.0 DU/Acre	3,872	691
Multifamily/Attached	18.0 DU/Acre	1,613	112
<b>Commercial</b>			
Office	0.2 FAR	252,310	43
Retail	0.2 FAR	424,000	71
<b>Industrial</b>			
	0.15 FAR	515,857	118
<b>Total Acres</b>			<b>1,382</b>

Source: Economic & Planning Systems



# INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The area of planning influence for the 2012 Bennett Comprehensive Plan includes large areas of unincorporated Arapahoe and Adams counties as well as the City of Aurora. These three jurisdictions, along with the Town of Bennett, the Aurora Bennett School District, the Aurora Bennett Sable-Altura Fire District, and the Bennett Recreation District are major stakeholders in ensuring coordinated regional planning. Ultimately, the realization of the Preferred Scenario and successful implementation of this comprehensive plan will hinge on the Town's ability to forge effective partnerships with these local government stakeholders.

Both Adams County and Arapahoe County are proposing to update their respective comprehensive plans in 2012. Aurora completed a comprehensive plan update in 2009. While Bennett's planning area excludes the City of Aurora, there is a portion of Aurora's Northeast Plains strategic area within the unincorporated Area of Planning Interest (See Figure 8).

During the development of the Bennett Comprehensive Plan, the Town initiated a process to coordinate its planning ideas with the major stakeholders. Several important issues have been identified that could ultimately form the basis for one or more intergovernmental agreements, including:

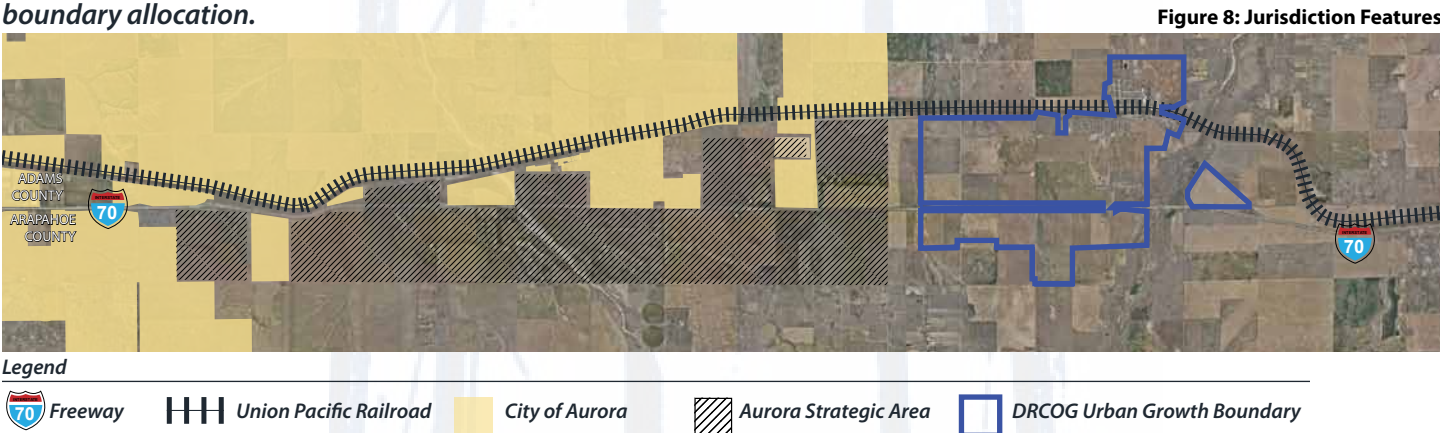
- **A governance structure for regional infrastructure improvements that include water, wastewater, transportation and open lands preservation.**
- **Revenue sharing from future commercial development.**
- **Joint development standards in anticipation of future annexation.**
- **Delineation of sending and receiving areas for TDR program**
- **Regulatory changes to the airport influence zone framework.**
- **Common interest in modifying the urban growth boundary allocation.**

**Achievable Goal:** To create a cooperative framework for regional land use planning in the eastern I-70 corridor.

**Key Strategy:** Promote the coordination of local and regional plans through active participation and leadership in the I-70 Regional Economic Advancement Partnership and the updates to the Adams County and Arapahoe County comprehensive plans.

**Catalyst Action:** Negotiate intergovernmental agreements for coordinated planning and service provision with the City of Aurora, Adams County and Arapahoe County.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall work with the Denver Regional Council of Governments to update its urban growth allocation area



# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

## Population and Household Characteristics

Bennett's population grew by 287 people between 2000 and 2010, which is an average annual rate of 1.3 percent, as shown in Table 1. Bennett increased by 119 households over the past decade. The average household size in Bennett dropped from 2.83 people per household in 2000 to 2.77 in 2010.

The average age of residents in Bennett is 35.2 years old, reflecting a younger population than surrounding communities as it is less than the average age of residents in Adams County (36.1) and Arapahoe County (35.7). Nearly one quarter of people in Bennett (24.7 percent) are under the age of 15. While Bennett has a relatively larger amount of younger people than the Denver metropolitan area, the town's average age increased from 30.9 in 2000 to 35.2 in 2010. In 2010, of Bennett residents reporting one race alone, 86 percent are White, 11 percent are Hispanic, and less than 1 percent are Black/African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, or Asian/ Pacific Islander.

## Employment Characteristics

Bennett experienced significant employment growth between 2001 and 2009. During this time, wage and salary employment nearly doubled from 417 to 786 jobs for an annual average growth rate of 8.2 percent (Table 2). Surrounding counties reflect growth rates more consistent with larger metropolitan areas. Bennett's historic growth patterns are rare as jobs outpaced household growth by 3:1.

## Health Characteristics

The town's built environment can help keep people safe and prevent illness. Bennett's transportation and utility systems, distribution of housing stock, and retail commercial services can encourage people who live, work, or play in Bennett to stay physically active and eat healthy foods. One indicator of a healthy community is access to healthy food. The statistics shown in Table 3 indicate that Bennett residents may face challenges in accessing healthy food.

**Table 1:**  
**Bennett Population and Household Trends, 2000-2010**

	2000	2010	2000-2010		
			Total	Ann. #	Ann. %
Population	2,021	2,308	287	28.7	1.3%
Households	715	834	119	11.9	1.6%
Average Household Size	2.83	2.77			

Source: US Census; Economic & Planning Systems

**Table 2:**  
**Bennett Employment, 2001-2009**

County	2001	2009	Change 2001-2009		
			Total #	Ann. #	Ann. %
Town of Bennett <sup>1</sup>	417	786	369	46	8.2%
Adams County	199,162	213,330	14,168	1,771	0.9%
Arapahoe County	400,840	420,294	19,454	2,432	0.6%

<sup>1</sup> Note that sole proprietors are not represented in the employment numbers  
Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis; Colo. Dept. of Labor and Employment;Economic & Planning Systems

**Table 3:**  
**Food Access**

1	# of Grocery stores (10,000+ sq. ft.)
0	Presence of one or more seasonal farmers' markets
36.5	% of children who qualify for free and reduced cost lunches
64.3	% of qualifying children who are eating free and reduced-cost lunches
72	# of Women, Infant and Children (WIC) clients
1	# of Tri-County Health Department WIC nutrition offices (part-time)



## NEIGHBORHOODS

The Summary of Projected Growth (page 15) notes demand in the next 25 years for 6,454 additional housing units within the Area of Planning Interest. There currently is not a wide variety of housing options within the planning area and an increase in housing diversity is needed to accommodate future growth.

A guiding principle of this plan is to develop neighborhood centers that allow for a mix of land uses with increases in densities, which is a departure from the historic growth pattern in the corridor. Benefits of concentrated mixed use development include an efficient land use pattern that increases transportation choices, reduces energy consumption, promotes water conservation, and offers more opportunities for social interaction.

Neighborhood centers are characterized by a core of civic, educational, entertainment, office and retail uses that support surrounding residential uses of varying types and densities. Each center's development will vary in density and intensity from large master planned neighborhoods on the western side of the Area of Planning Interest to smaller in-fill projects within downtown Bennett Downtown (See Figure 1).

**Achievable Goal:** To provide a diversity of housing types at various densities.

**Key Strategy:** Foster innovative infrastructure practices, site planning, and mixed use development patterns.

**Catalyst Action:** Update the Bennett Land Use Code and its associated design standards to offer a range of available, affordable, and diverse housing options.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall encourage master-planned, mixed-use development in concentrated centers.

Figure 1: Downtown Bennett Main Street Concept



## ANNEXATION

A fundamental principle forming the basis for the Town's annexation policy is that annexation is an agreement between a willing land owner and a willing local government. The Town and property owner should enter into a pre-annexation agreement as a precursor to any annexation. Pre-annexation agreements establish the conditions of annexation and provide the Town and property owner with a set of negotiated obligations upon annexation.

Five annexation priority areas are outlined on Figure 7, Annexation Priority Areas. These priority areas are intended to provide guidance, not an obligation, for future annexation by the Town of Bennett. In general, the Town's top priority is to annex areas contiguous to Town boundaries and within the I-70 corridor. Additional considerations include:

• **With minor exception, Colorado annexation statutes limit the extension of a municipal boundary to no more than three miles within any one year. In general, Annexation Priority Areas 1, 2, and 3 correspond to the three mile annexation boundaries.**

• **The timing of annexation into Priority Areas 2 and 3 will be dependent on the introduction of a renewable water supply into Bennett's Area of Planning Interest. Conversely, capacity in the Town's water supply may provide opportunity for annexation of potential industrial development in Area 4 and residential development in Annexation Priority Area 5.**

• **The City of Aurora is located immediately adjacent to Bennett's Area of Planning Interest. The Aurora Strategic Area, which overlaps Annexation Priority Area 2 and 3, is an area that the City of Aurora may also have interest in annexing in the future.**

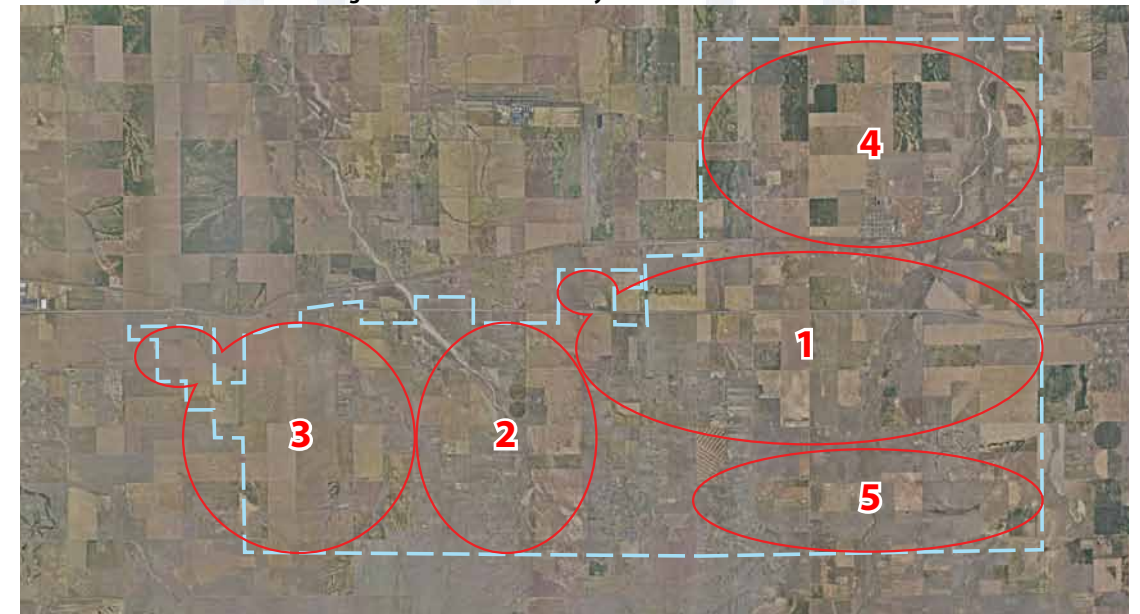
**Achievable Goal:** To support the development of Bennett as a model healthy community of interconnected employment and neighborhood centers.

**Key Strategy:** Utilize incorporated lands and public rights-of-way to establish contiguity for future annexation of land on a prioritized basis.

**Catalyst Action:** Adopt an Annexation Strategic Plan that serves to support Colorado statutory provision C.R.S 31-12-105, which requires that a municipality have a plan in place prior to the annexation of any land.

**Policy Directive:** Existing rural residential subdivisions in all annexation priority areas shall not be considered for annexation, unless critically in need of sewer and/or water service due to environmental concerns, failing septic systems, or poor water quality or quantity.

Figure 7: Annexation Priority Areas





## COMMUNITY HEALTH

Bennett's commitment to healthy life style choices is reflected in their planning for recreational activity. The Town adopted their first Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan in 2009, followed by a Regional Trail Plan in 2011. These plans emphasize the Town's commitment to recreational resources that support community health through physical activity and mobility within the community.

The relative size of Bennett makes its progress in implementing healthy eating and active living practices impressive. Bennett has developed a multi-use trail that extends from the residential core of the community to the local grocery store, enabling safer pedestrian and bicycle grocery trips. Bennett has also improved railroad crossings and striped two residential streets for bicycle lanes that are routes to local schools.

An overarching objective for updating Bennett's comprehensive plan is to increase opportunities for residents to make healthy choices related to food and physical activity by implementing sustainable policies and practices for the built environment. As such, there is a strong emphasis on community health as an underlying principle to the 2011 Town of Bennett Comprehensive Plan.

In particular, community health can be enhanced through the promotion of walking, bicycling and transit as routine transportation choices. On a practical level, the plan recognizes the need for an increase in transportation choices to support these goals which transportation choices that include bicycle trails, sidewalks and mass transit reduce the dependence upon automobiles, and create streets that are safe for pedestrians and bicyclists alike.

The plan also recognizes that land use planning plays an important role in community health. One example, the proposed neighborhood centers with their higher densities and mixed land uses will help shorten distances between homes, workplaces, schools, shopping, and recreation. Shorter distances improve accessibility and walkability within the community for all age groups and demographics.

Beyond increasing transportation and land use choices, there should be a public health emphasis on good nutrition through best practices in healthy food access. Healthy food access can be supported by urban agriculture, community gardens, and locally sourced foods.

**Achievable Goal:** To promote healthy eating and active living.

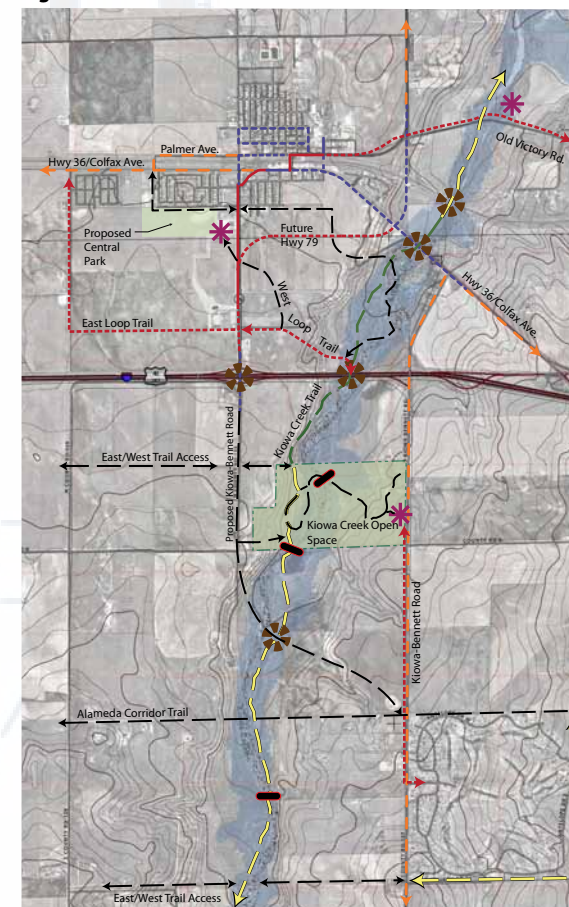
**Key Strategy:** Increase public health resources through partnerships with organizations such as: Tri-County Health Department, LiveWell Colorado, the Colorado Health Foundation and others as a model healthy community initiative.

**Catalyst Action:** Conduct a sidewalk survey within the current incorporated Town boundaries and prepare recommendations for the construction and maintenance of new and existing sidewalks.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall ensure the creation of a built environment that supports healthy options for physical activity and good nutrition as foundations for sustainable health.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall implement its Regional Trails Plan to provide for the recreational and tourism needs of residents and visitors, and encourage other sports or other recreational activity along with the commercial facilities supporting such uses.

Figure 6: Bennett Trails Master Plan



## EMPLOYMENT

The Area of Planning Interest is part of the Airport/Montbello industrial space submarket, which is projected to capture 77.6 percent of the new growth in industrial space and ultimately represent 32 percent of the total industrial space in the Denver metropolitan area. As noted in the Summary of Projected Growth, there is a projected demand for 118 acres of industrial land by 2035 within Bennett's planning area.

The concentration of commercial and industrial development into employment centers is a key component of the Preferred Scenario. These employment centers are proposed along the I-70 Corridor at major interchanges; parallel to the Union Pacific railway line; and proximate to E-470, SH 79 and 56th Avenue with excellent access to DIA and Front Range Airport.

The employment centers are intended to serve as a location for non-residential commercial and industrial land uses inclusive of large scale warehousing, manufacturing, outdoor storage, distribution, and trans-loading facilities. Additional supporting uses could include hotels, restaurants, child care centers, and small-scale retail.

With one exception, the employment centers are all positioned near the Front Range Airport Influence Zone which, as a result of federal and county regulations, only allows limited development. In particular, an employment center could not encroach within Restriction Area 1, which prohibits construction of structures for residential, commercial, institutional, or industrial uses. Employment centers are better suited for Restriction Area 2, which only prohibits the construction of residences. Any planned development within this Airport Influence Zone will have to be coordinated with the Town, Adams County and Arapahoe County.

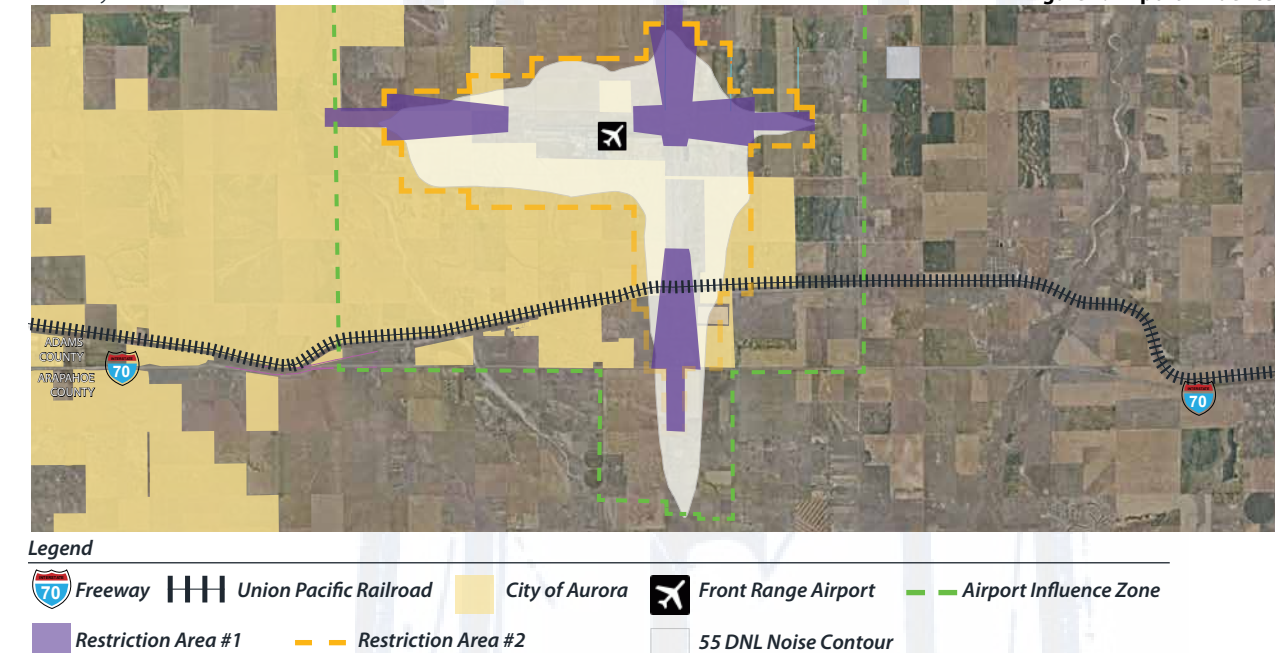
**Achievable Goal:** To enhance the sales tax and employment base of the Town by attracting and retaining commercial and industrial development.

**Key Strategy:** Reserve land for future employment centers as delineated on the Preferred Scenario.

**Catalyst Action:** Prepare a Target Industry Market Study to determine advantages and priorities for attracting a variety of new commercial and industrial development into identified employment center locations that will meet the daily needs of area workers.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall proactively annex and zone land for employment centers.

Figure 2: Airport Influence





## OPEN LANDS

The bulk of the Area of Planning Interest is open lands, characterized by large agricultural land holdings with pockets of very low density, large lot residential areas. The area also includes four major (one hundred year event) floodplains that serve as natural drainage ways and riparian corridors. Existing residents place a high value on their environment, and strongly desire the preservation of a rural lifestyle. While no significant oil and gas production is occurring, 3D seismic testing for oil reserves within the subsurface Niobrara formation has recently been initiated.

Tier Three Rural Preservation and Tier Four Environmental areas (see Preferred Scenario text on page 7) represent the open lands within the Area of Planning Interest. To compliment the core concept of Tier Two Developing Urban areas as concentrated growth centers, the Tier Three and Tier Four areas are proposed to be protected from development or allow only very low density rural residential development, using a range of planning tools including:

- **A Transferable Development Right (TDR) program to allow landowners to transfer entitled density from Rural Preservation and Environmental areas to Stable Urban and Developing Urban areas; participating parcels are protected with conservation easements.**

- **A Purchase of Development Right (PDR) program to allow landowners in Rural Preservation and Environmental areas to sell development rights to developers in Stable Urban and Developing Urban areas, relying on a public financing district or mechanism to generate a funding stream. As with a TDR program, land which has development rights purchased is protected with a conservation easement.**

- **Conservation subdivisions to concentrate development and infrastructure provision in such a way that remaining open space areas are preserved. Conservation subdivisions may involve a single parcel, or two or more contiguous parcels, where each parcel is at least 70 acres in size. Proposed development cannot exceed two dwelling units for each 35 acre increment, yet may be clustered in smaller lots on a portion of the property with the remaining property in a conservation easement.**

In order to maintain the rural character of the area, subdivided lots created through any of these tools should be screened, clustered or distributed in such a manner as to minimize visual and environmental impacts, and to maximize the use of existing roads and utilities. Dedicated open space can also be used to buffer new development that occurs adjacent to existing or future rural residential neighborhoods.

**Achievable Goal:** To protect and preserve the rural character of open lands.

**Key Strategy:** Work with Adams County to expand their TDR program to identify sending and receiving areas based on the four planning tiers.

**Catalyst Action:** Revise local land use regulations to include provisions for conservation subdivisions.

**Policy Directive:** The use of community well and septic systems shall be encouraged where connection to an available water or sanitary sewer system is not feasible.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall encourage future regional trails within riparian corridors while protecting their natural values.

Figure 3: Sample Conservation Subdivision Configuration



## SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The vast majority of Bennett's Area of Planning Interest is undeveloped with limited services or available infrastructure. While the Town of Bennett provides basic municipal services for its current population, the rural location of the community results in unique governing operations, such as the need to coordinate with two law enforcement agencies, a fire district that covers 325 square miles a school district, and a recreation district.

Bennett's ability to accommodate future urban growth and development is also dependent on available infrastructure capacity, most notably a reliable water supply. The Town's existing ground water and wastewater systems can support a maximum of 900 additional Single Family Equivalents, allowing for an estimated 300 acres of new development within and contiguous to Bennett's current incorporated area. Total land demand for development within the planning area during the next 25 years is estimated at approximately 1,400 acres; 4.5 times what Bennett can currently accommodate.

The Town's limited, non-renewable water resources underscore the need for a regional, renewable water supply. All water resources should be explored, including reuse, recycling and reclaiming water. The development of a long term water supply plan that identifies infrastructure needs, water supply opportunities and water quality concerns is recommended. An efficient, region-wide services, and infrastructure delivery system will limit the system's capital and operating costs, easing the fiscal burden on existing and future residents. Accordingly, the Preferred Scenario (page 8-9) calls for concentrating new development in neighborhood and employment centers.

It is recognized that the magnitude of implementing the Preferred Scenario warrants a large-scale financing tool. A regional public financing entity, such as a General Improvement District, a Special Improvement District, a Metropolitan District, or other type of entitle capable of generating revenue to support debt service is recommended. Further, a Regional Management Entity (RME) could be established under a district's service plan. The alternative is smaller-scale projects with fragmented infrastructure systems.

Factors that should be addressed in the service plan are the ability of the district to have representation from local government on the board to ensure accountability to the community at large. It is expected that Adams County and Arapahoe County will play important roles, given:

- **The need for commitment and participation in the formation of a financing district;**

- **Development interests may seek County entitlements; and**

- **Inclusion into a financing district will be a necessary component of County land use approvals.**

In the long-term, there will be a substantial amount of assessed valuation and development activity to support a financing district. Establishing the district before market pressure builds is critical to creating a mechanism with a sufficiently large base to effect regional solutions.

**Achievable Goal:** To provide adequate services and facilities to support existing and projected areas of population and growth.

**Key Strategy:** Promote the formation of a General Improvement District, Metropolitan District, or other entity to develop a renewable water supply.

**Catalyst Action:** Evaluate options, select the preferred mechanism, draft a service plan, and establish a financing district that generally covers the planning area.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall support the use of special districts to finance the cost of new infrastructure and services where appropriate.

**Policy Directive:** The Town supports the exploration of a full range of options for serving the area with water, wastewater and drainage system infrastructure.



## TRANSPORTATION

Several recently completed studies addressing transportation needs within the Area of Planning Interest inform this comprehensive plan, including the Downtown Bennett Planning Study, the Grade Separation Preliminary Feasibility Study, the Arapahoe County 2035 Transportation Plan, and the City of Aurora Northeast Aurora Transportation Study. Key recommendations reflected on the Preferred Scenario Map include:

- **Constructing three new interchanges on I-70 at Quail Run Road, Schumaker Road and Yulle Road, and improving the existing Kiowa-Bennett Road interchange.**
- **Extending the existing and planned east/west roadways from Aurora into the Area of Planning Interest, including East 56th Avenue, East 6th Avenue/Mitchell Road, and East Jewell Avenue.**
- **The development of north/south arterial roads spaced every two miles south from I-70 to East Jewell Avenue.**
- **The realignment of SH 79 east of Bennett, which begins south of 38th Avenue and ends just north of I-70, and the realignment of the Kiowa-Bennett Road to the west to connect with the existing Bennett interchange.**

The Preferred Scenario Map also identifies the development of a dedicated truck route off realigned SH 79 south of the UPRR to an improved interchange at I-70, connecting with Kiowa-Bennett Road at 6th Avenue. Beyond improvements to the roadway network are proposed several phased transit elements:

- **Express bus service to the Denver metro area, as the majority of the Area of Planning Interest is currently located outside the existing Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) boundary.**
- **The initiation of a local bus circulator or trolley service that will give residents the ability to travel between neighborhood and employment centers.**
- **Commuter rail service to RTD's planned East Corridor commuter rail line using either the existing Union Pacific rail line or new rail installed in the I-70 median.**
- **A high speed rail station located at an I-70 interchange in the Area of Planning Influence, with service from Denver.**

Potential transit improvements that extend beyond the 2035 planning horizon are delineated in Figure 5 and include:

**Achievable Goal:** To provide a safe, efficient, and connected multi-modal transportation network.

**Key Strategy:** Promote the incremental development of a multi-modal transportation network through active participation and leadership in regional planning efforts.

**Catalyst Action:** Pursue the introduction of express bus service to the Denver metropolitan area.

**Policy Directive:** The Town shall work with DRCOG and other regional entities to coordinate development of a multi-modal transportation system.



Figure 5: Corridor Transit

## PREFERRED SCENARIO

Three plan alternatives and a draft preferred scenario were reviewed at public workshops held on July 28th, 2011 and August 30th, 2011. The Preferred Scenario, illustrated on page 8 and 9, provides a conceptual planning framework that is consistent with the Town's vision and guiding principles.

The Preferred Scenario identifies two geographic distinctions:

1. The Area of Planning Interest, which includes the Town of Bennett and an unincorporated planning area within Adams and Arapahoe counties; and
2. The Area of Planning Influence, a potential growth area within the I-70 Corridor that may impact the Area of Planning Interest that includes the community of Watkins, Front Range Airport and an undeveloped portion of northeast Aurora.

The Area of Planning Interest is further categorized into four planning tiers:

### Tier One: Stable Urban

That portion of the existing incorporated Town of Bennett, which for the most part is a well developed and mature urban environment with adequate services and infrastructure capability.

### Tier Two: Developing Urban

Areas where development, either contiguous to Tier One or as stand-alone neighborhood and employment centers is contemplated. Developing Urban areas are characterized by direct access to I-70 and proposed arterial roadways and transit, and the potential for targeted delivery of infrastructure and urban services.

### Tier Three: Rural/ Rural Preservation

The bulk of the Area of Planning Interest, this tier includes existing rural residential neighborhoods, large lot development, very low density cluster development and large agricultural land holdings that desire to remain rural in character. The Open Lands element calls for a number of mechanisms to protect and/or preserve Tier Three areas.

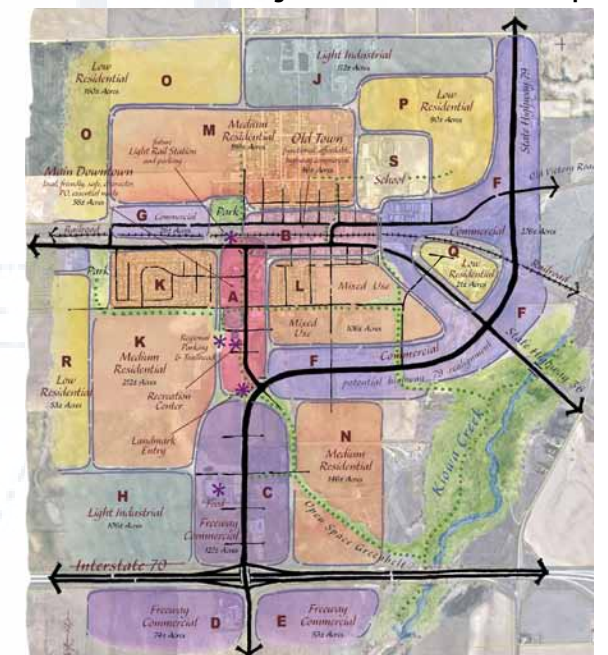
### Tier Four: Environmental

Tier Four areas are the designated one-hundred year flood plains. Environmental areas represent significant value to current and future residents in terms of open space, trail systems, passive recreation, flood control, water quality, and water supply.

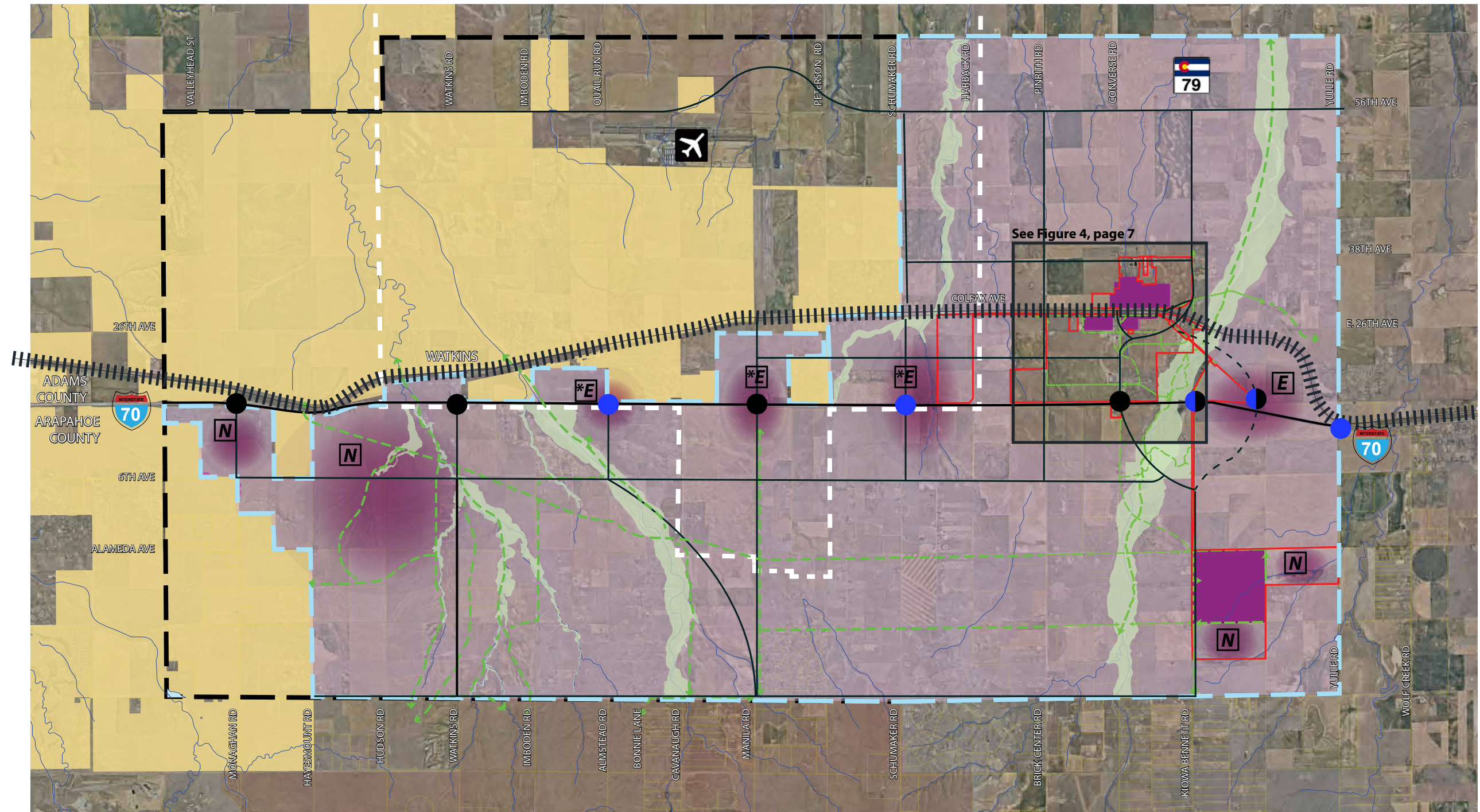
The Preferred Scenario envisions a healthy, sustainable community where residents can live, work, and play locally, setting Bennett and its proximity to the I-70 corridor apart from a conventional development pattern. Key elements of the Plan include:

- **Future land development is concentrated in mixed use, master-planned neighborhood and employment centers wrapped with agricultural lands and very low density rural development.**
- **The open land between neighborhood and employment centers becomes a valuable community asset, with a regional trail system along riparian corridors providing important recreational and environmental linkages.**
- **Access, mobility, and circulation are improved as development occurs, with bus transit providing service between neighborhood and employment centers while commuter or high speed rail options are explored.**
- **An efficient service and infrastructure delivery system limits capital and operating costs, easing the fiscal burden of existing and future residents.**
- **An Intergovernmental Agreement between Arapahoe County, Adams County, Aurora and Bennett addresses coordination of land use issues, public financing districts, joint development standards, capital investment policies, and potential for revenue sharing.**
- **The 2010 Town of Bennett Downtown Study and its land use concept (Figure 4), hereby adopted by reference.**

Figure 4: Bennett Land Use Concept

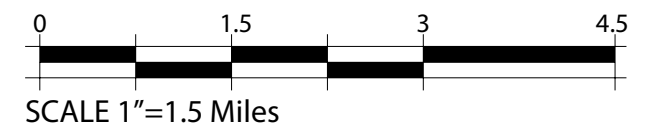






### Legend

- |                            |                      |                         |   |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Area of Planning Interest  | Freeway              | Front Range Airport     | Planning Tier 1: Stable Urban   |
| Area of Planning Influence | State Highway        | Airport Influence Zone  | Planning Tier 2: Developing Urban                                     |
| Town of Bennett            | Existing Interchange | Proposed Arterial       | Employment Center<br>* Subject to Airport Influence Zone restrictions |
| City of Aurora             | Proposed Interchange | Proposed Truck Bypass   | Neighborhood Center   |
| State Land Board           |                      | Proposed Regional Trail | Planning Tier 3: Rural/ Rural Preservation                            |
|                            |                      |                         | Planning Tier 4: Environmental  |



## PREFERRED SCENARIO MAP